

BIKE-UP!

Sustainable mobility in Ferrara

May 1st – May 7th, 2026



BIKE-UP! - Sustainable Mobility in Ferrara

Educational Pathway

***How a seven-day youth exchange in Ferrara turned the bicycle
into a learning journey***

A methodological companion to the BIKE-UP! toolkits

Project	<i>BIKE-UP! Sustainable Mobility in Ferrara</i>
Programme	Erasmus+ KA152-YOU – Mobility of Young People
Project number	2025-3-IT03-KA152-YOU-000387510
Coordinator	Youth Mosaic – Bondeno (Ferrara), Italy
Exchange	Ferrara, Italy 1-7 May 2026
Participants	20 young participants + 5 group leaders, supported by 2 facilitators (27 people in total)

Purpose of this overview

This document explains the educational architecture of *BIKE-UP!*: why the programme was designed around the bicycle and the city of Ferrara, how the activities formed a progressive learning pathway, and which elements proved transferable beyond the exchange. It complements two stand-alone toolkits that document individual methods in ready-to-use form.

1. About the project

BIKE-UP! Sustainable Mobility in Ferrara was an Erasmus+ KA152 youth exchange coordinated by **Youth Mosaic** in partnership with:

- **Donegal ETB – Letterkenny Training Centre** (Ireland)
- **Asociația Sportivă Club Faci Sport** (Romania)
- **Genç Gelecek – Young Future** (Türkiye)
- **Shoura for Building National Consensus** (Jordan)

From 1 to 7 May 2026, *BIKE-UP!* brought together 20 young participants aged 18-26 and 5 group leaders from five national delegations, supported by 2 facilitators, for a total of 27 people involved in the mobility. Fourteen of the twenty young participants (70%) were young people with fewer opportunities, facing mainly economic and geographical barriers.

The project used the bicycle as an educational tool to explore sustainable urban mobility, environmental awareness, inclusion and active citizenship. Ferrara was not treated simply as a venue: its cycling infrastructure, public spaces, parks, walls and surrounding landscapes became part of the learning environment. Participants were invited to compare what they experienced locally with mobility habits and challenges in their own communities.

The project pursued four connected objectives:

- raise environmental awareness and encourage more sustainable mobility choices;
- explore the bicycle as a tool connected to accessibility, autonomy, inclusion and intercultural learning;
- strengthen young people's capacity to discuss, imagine and advocate for more sustainable and inclusive communities;
- develop transversal competences such as teamwork, communication, leadership and problem solving, together with green competences linked to mobility and the critical reading of urban space.

The project connected in particular with the Erasmus+ themes of environment and climate change, green transport and mobility, and European identity, citizenship and values. It also related to European Youth Goals #3 “Inclusive Societies”, #9 “Space and Participation for All” and #10 “Sustainable Green Europe”.

2. Why the bicycle?

The main design choice was to avoid treating sustainability, inclusion, citizenship and intercultural learning as separate topics. Instead, *BIKE-UP!* used one familiar object, the bicycle, as a common lens through which all four could be explored.

The bicycle provided a coherent project identity.

It is a concrete everyday object, but it also opens wider questions about who can move independently, how cities allocate public space, what transport choices cost environmentally and socially, and how mobility affects participation in community life. This made it possible to move from personal experience to urban systems and civic questions without losing the central thread of the exchange.

3. The educational approach

BIKE-UP! relied on non-formal education and experiential learning. Frontal input was kept limited; most learning happened through riding, creating, debating, role play, collaborative tasks and structured reflection. Facilitators supported the process, while participants generated meanings, comparisons, proposals and outputs themselves.

The bicycle as the connecting thread. Activities repeatedly returned to the same object from different angles: as a means of transport, a personal memory, a climate choice, a design object, a symbol of autonomy and a starting point for civic discussion.

The city as a learning environment. Ferrara's public space became educational content. Bike routes through parks, the walls and surrounding landscapes allowed participants to experience mobility choices and urban design directly rather than discussing them only in abstract terms.

Participants as co-creators. Young people worked in mixed international teams, compared their national realities, designed cities and proposals, produced collective artworks and contributed continuously through peer interaction and reflection.

Reflection built into the rhythm. Daily debriefing, a mid-term check and a final participatory evaluation helped turn activities into learning. Expectations and fears collected at the beginning were revisited at the end, supporting continuity across the seven days.

4. The seven-day learning pathway

The programme was conceived as a progression rather than a sequence of independent sessions: participants first built trust and a shared frame, then connected the bicycle to personal experience, explored the city, imagined alternatives, questioned inclusion and accessibility, and finally consolidated the learning. Implementation also required adaptation when weather conditions disrupted the planned outdoor programme.

Because poor weather prevented the planned outdoor programme on Day 6, the second Bike Day was rescheduled to Day 7. The final day therefore combined completion of the territorial experience with harvesting, evaluation and learning recognition, preserving the educational logic while adapting the sequence to real conditions.

CONNECT → PERSONALISE → EXPERIENCE → IMAGINE → QUESTION ACCESS → HARVEST

Day	Learning move	Key experiences	Educational function
Day 1	Connect	Group building, expectations and fears, Erasmus+ and European values, cycling/sustainability quiz, national comparison posters	Create trust, shared responsibility and a common European/intercultural frame.
Day 2	Personalise	Story-Bike, My Story Bike, Wheels of Change, Safety on Wheels with ByGo	Move from the bicycle as a social object to personal meaning, creativity and practical safety.
Day 3	Experience	First Bike Day, sustainability photo challenge, outdoor e-mobility debate, mindfulness, Miles, Memories & Mindset	Turn sustainability concepts into lived and measurable experience in the city.
Day 4	Imagine	Climate Action Lab, Climate Bingo, The Ideal City – Let's Govern the Future!, First Intercultural Night	Use what participants had observed to imagine alternatives, negotiate priorities and practise collective decision-making.
Day 5	Question access	Bike & SDGs Challenge, Energy from Bikes, Bikes for All, Gender & Bike, Second Intercultural Night	Examine who benefits from mobility, where barriers exist, and how sustainable mobility connects with equality and autonomy.
Day 6	Weather-related adjustment	Adverse weather prevented the planned outdoor block. The second Bike Day was postponed.	Protect safety and learning quality by adapting the timetable rather than forcing an outdoor activity under unsuitable conditions.
Day 7	Experience + Harvest	Second Bike Day: Walls, Countryside & River (15 km); final reflection, participatory evaluation, Youthpass closing	Complete the territorial experience and translate the week into memories, competences and learning recognition.

5. Learning outcomes and Youthpass

Learning recognition was introduced before the mobility: group leaders familiarised participants with Youthpass and the European Key Competences framework so that reflection on learning was present from the beginning rather than added only at the end.

Across the pathway, participants worked particularly on:

- environmental and green competences: connecting everyday transport choices with climate impact, observing urban space critically and translating sustainability principles into practical behaviour;
- personal, social and learning-to-learn competences: teamwork in mixed international groups, communication across languages and cultures, empathy, self-reflection and peer support;
- citizenship competences: discussing EU values, sustainable urban choices, accessibility and public priorities, and practising proposal-making through debate and role play;
- creative and initiative-taking competences: co-designing artworks, campaigns and imaginary cities, and solving practical tasks with limited resources.

The link between activities and learning outcomes was intentionally visible:

Learning dimension	Examples from the pathway
Green competences	Bike Days; Miles, Memories & Mindset; Climate Action Lab; Bike & SDGs Challenge
Citizenship and participation	European values sessions; e-mobility debate; The Ideal City; Bikes for All
Personal and social competences	Mixed-team work; Secret Friend; daily debriefing; peer support and collaborative tasks
Creative and initiative-taking competences	Wheels of Change; Energy from Bikes; collective city design
Intercultural learning	National mobility comparisons; mixed teams; shared decision-making; Two Intercultural Nights

Daily debriefing circles, the mid-term evaluation and the final participatory evaluation gave participants repeated opportunities to identify what they were learning. The closing Youthpass moment then supported them in translating the experience into competences they could articulate beyond the project.

6. Inclusion, safety and the green dimension in practice

Inclusion was a structural feature of the group rather than a stand-alone topic. Fourteen of the twenty young participants had fewer opportunities, mainly linked to economic and geographical barriers. Practical measures, including reference leaders within subgroups, collectively agreed ground rules, a signed code of conduct and adapted food arrangements, supported participation throughout the exchange.

Accessibility and equality were also part of the educational content. Activities such as *Bikes for All* and *Gender & Bike* invited participants to question who can use mobility systems safely and independently.

Practical safety was addressed before participants cycled in the city: the *Safety on Wheels* session, run with the local cooperative ByGo, prepared the group for riding safely in traffic, and each Bike Day was ridden in subgroups with a reference leader.

Environmental sustainability was practised in everyday project choices as well as discussed in sessions. Participants moved around Ferrara mainly by bicycle and on foot; meals prioritised local and seasonal food; reusable bottles were encouraged; and waste was sorted. This helped connect the project theme with daily behaviour during the mobility itself.

7. Two methods developed into stand-alone toolkits

Two methods were selected because they combined a clear learning purpose with enough structure and transferability to be useful to other youth workers, organisations and schools.

Wheels of Change – Upcycling Toolkit. A hands-on method that transforms discarded bicycle wheels into collective artworks while opening discussion on circular economy, waste and sustainable mobility. The toolkit documents objectives, learning outcomes, materials, timing, safety, facilitation steps, debriefing and adaptation ideas. The method was later replicated at local community events in Ferrara.

Miles, Memories & Mindset – Carbon Footprint Toolkit. A cycling-based learning method that combines urban exploration with a carbon-footprint challenge. Participants record distance, compare cycling with car travel and use avoided-emissions calculations as a starting point for reflection on mobility choices. The toolkit includes the calculation method, worked examples, debriefing questions, links with GreenComp and Youthpass, and adaptation tips for different local contexts.

How the three resources work together. This Educational Pathway explains the overall programme architecture; the two toolkits provide detailed instructions for replicating specific methods. The overview is therefore a methodological frame, not a third activity manual.

8. From mobility to community: transfer and dissemination

During the exchange, the local cooperative *ByGo* contributed to the practical *Safety on Wheels* training. The strongest transfer beyond the participant group happened afterwards, when methods developed during *BIKE-UP!* were reused in local settings.

Examples of this follow-up included a *Wheels of Change* workshop at the “*Pedala!*” cycling festival in May 2026, a dedicated *ByGo Day* in June 2026, and an activity in July 2026 with *Area Giovani*, the Municipality of Ferrara’s participation centre for adolescents, co-facilitated by the Italian group leader together with an exchange participant.

The project materials were also shared through Youth Mosaic and partner communication channels across the five countries. A follow-up questionnaire three months after the exchange was used to monitor how participants were transferring learning into their local contexts.

9. Lessons for practitioners

1. **Build around one strong thread.** The bicycle gave the programme a recognisable identity and allowed environmental, social and civic questions to connect naturally.
2. **Use the venue as educational content.** Ferrara mattered because the city could be experienced, observed and discussed. A location becomes methodologically relevant when it contributes to learning, not merely when it hosts the group.
3. **Alternate experience, creativity and reflection.** Physical activity alone does not automatically become non-formal learning. Observation tasks, discussion and debriefing were what helped participants make meaning from the experience.
4. **Treat inclusion as design.** Participant profiles, practical support measures and learning content need to reinforce one another. Inclusion is stronger when it affects how the programme is organised as well as what it talks about.
5. **Plan for adaptation.** Outdoor programmes depend on real conditions. The weather-related disruption on Day 6 required a change of sequence, but the second Bike Day could still be completed safely on Day 7. Coherence should guide adaptation; it should not become rigidity.
6. **Publish selectively.** Two methods were developed into toolkits because they were sufficiently distinctive and reusable. Documenting fewer methods well can create more value than turning every activity into an output.

10. Credits and licence

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- Asociația Sportivă Club Faci Sport (Romania)
- Genç Gelecek Eğitim Araştırma Girişimcilik Kültür Sanat Teknoloji ve Oyunlaştırma Derneği (Türkiye)
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